

CITY OF CONCORD

NEW HAMPSHIRE

City Hall • 41 Green Street • Concord, NH 03301 • tel. 603/225-8595 • fax 603/228-2701

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes APRIL 6, 2012 7:30 A.M.

The meeting convened at City Council Chambers, 37 Green Street, Concord, NH. Refreshments were provided courtesy of Chris Carley.

PRESENT: Allen Bennett, Christopher Carley, Byron Champlin, Walter Chapin, Mark Coen,

Stephen Heavener, Brad Hosmer, John Hoyt, Jan McClure, William Norton, Keith

Nyhan, Connie Rosemont, Dan St. Hilaire, and Claudia Walker

ABSENT: Tim Bernier, Peter Cook, and Larry Gloekler

STAFF: Carlos P. Baía, Deputy City Manager – Development

Matt Walsh, Assistant for Special Projects Bev Rafferty, Administrative Assistant

GUEST: Gloria McPherson, City Planner

1. MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 9, 2012 MEETING

Byron Champlin made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted; seconded by Allen Bennett; motion passed unanimously.

2. OPEN SPACE/CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT ZONING DRAFT RE-WRITE (Conclusion)

City Planner Gloria McPherson briefly reviewed the changes from last month and discussed some of the exemptions proposed.

Relative to the payment in lieu option, Ms. McPherson noted that she had since spoken with City Assessor Kathy Temchack and an appraised value of a conservation easement could be a metric to use. However, Bill Norton noted that conservation easement appraisals are very difficult and expensive. Ms. McPherson concurred and mentioned that communities are experiencing lead times of 3-4 months for conservation easement appraisals.

Ms. McPherson is also proposing allowing developers to meet their conservation/open space requirement by providing land that might be contiguous to an existing conservation area. Stephen Heavener inquired if the adjacent land has to be owned by the same owner but Ms. McPherson noted it did not and, in fact, it could be another parcel somewhere else in the city.

Ms. McPherson posted some maps showing where some cluster developments are currently around Hooksett Turnpike, Clinton Street, Birchdale Road, and Stickney Hill.

Ms. McPherson informed EDAC that a proposed cluster subdivision on West Parish Road, in the RO district, had gone to the Zoning Board this week and she presented the plan of the new subdivision. It is a three lot cluster subdivision with several acres of open space contiguous to the housing lots and it required a perimeter buffer. Ms. McPherson noted the West Parish Road parcel demonstrated why she is proposing to pull design and layout standards out of the zoning ordinance. The zoning ordinance is very "black and white." It does not easily allow for planning flexibility based on site specific factors. In the West Parish Road example, action by the Zoning Board was necessary.

Chairperson Carley inquired why the city considered 15% slopes too steep to be considered "buildable" to meet the open space threshold. Ms. McPherson acknowledged that this criterion needed to be changed as there is still conservation/open space value in land that may have topographical variety.

Chairperson Carley inquired if EDAC would make an endorsement of these changes.

Jan McClure made a motion that EDAC support the concept of these proposed changes presented by Ms. McPherson; seconded by Claudia Walker; vote was unanimous.

Keith Nyhan asked how these changes support economic development. Chairperson Carley noted these changes allowed more flexibility to the property owner for the purpose of creating useful land. Mr. Baía indicated that staff would include language in the Report to Council that will include a brief explanation of the economic development merit.

3. OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR REVISITED

Bill Norton explained that the original Opportunity Corridor showed housing in the South end and it ended up with a steam plant instead. In this slow economic downturn Mr. Norton felt that EDAC should be looking at what to do next.

Points raised during this discussion included:

- 1. Are residential units viable with views to scrap yards?
- 2. When the Opportunity Corridor study was done, it estimated \$400 million in mixed-use development but—according to Mr. Norton—based on the build-out patterns thus far, the southern Opportunity Corridor may only generate \$100 million.
- 3. If housing is not viable due to present development pattern, where will the City locate future residential housing in this area?

Bill Norton noted that now is the time for CATCH, CRDC, and others to work proactively on re-thinking the Opportunity Corridor.

Mark Coen asked about the locations in the Corridor most conducive to housing. Matt Walsh saw opportunity in the long term for residences fronting on South Main Street near the gas house rather than near the marsh.

Keith Nyhan noted the direction of the plan issued years ago has changed. He concluded that the city may have to start contemplating other ideas.

Stephen Heavener (CRDC) inquired about a budget and how the City purchases properties (i.e. the tannery). Matt Walsh noted that the City has historically used the Economic Development Reserve. Carlos Baía added that the Agway property is being purchased with TIF (Tax Increment Financing) dollars.

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John Hoyt (Concord Housing Authority) noted the Redevelopment Authority has also done some land banking.

The merits of land banking in the Opportunity Corridor were debated. Matt Walsh felt that land banking in the Opportunity Corridor may be necessary as there may be perceived or actual contamination that might discourage the private sector at the outset. The infrastructure is also old and would likely need to be replaced adding significant cost to a transaction.

Mark Coen referenced the northern end of the Opportunity Corridor where the City is attempting to make the connection from Storrs Street to Horseshoe Pond. He asked if a private developer could do it vs. the city owning the land and doing the work.

Byron Champlin suggested a tour of the Opportunity Corridor might be helpful.

Keith Nyhan left the meeting at 8:50 AM.

Dan St. Hilaire noted that the turnpike ends at Exit 12 so if it is extended to I-393, that would open and expand that land and make it more viable.

Carlos Baía will look into organizing a tour of the Opportunity Corridor.

Due to the time, items 4 – 6 were not discussed.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly A. Rafferty Administrative Assistant